

**Archeological Testing and Monitoring
Wayside Exhibits
Valley Forge National Historical Park**

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Abstract

Archeological testing at the location of selected wayside exhibits at Valley Forge National Historical Park was conducted by the Park Archeology Branch of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office between April 11 and 14, 1989. The testing at Waysides 1, 2, 13, 16, 17, 19, and 23b (Figure 1) did not indicate the presence of significant subsurface resources. Subsequent monitoring of construction, conducted between April 20 and 24, did not reveal the presence of any culturally significant features.

Statement of Resource Problem

Valley Forge National Historical Park contains a large portion of the area utilized by the Continental Army for their winter encampment of 1777-78. The primary cultural resources within the park are the remains of this encampment scattered across two opposing sandstone ridges and an adjacent quartzite mountain.

Previous excavations within brigade areas have demonstrated the difficulty of defining archeological features at Valley Forge (Cooper 1988, Parrington 1979). The General Management Plan for the park identified the development of wayside exhibits as necessary for visitor interpretation throughout the park (Denver Service Center 1982:61). Construction plans for the development of these exhibits were submitted for review by the Regional Office in the winter of 1988. Because many of these exhibits were located within or immediately adjacent to encampment resources, a program of testing and construction monitoring was specified to prevent destruction of the historic resources (Orr 1989)

Archeological Investigation

Field Strategy

Testing strategy consisted of the excavation of a single test unit within the boundary of construction disturbance established by the park prior to testing. Excavation was conducted either to sterile soil or to the depth of one foot, the latter coinciding with the

depth of construction disturbance. All soil was screened through one-quarter inch hardware cloth and recovered artifacts were collected by stratigraphic provenience. Test unit size varied from two and one half by five foot rectangular tests, to one and one half diameter round holes. Five rectangular units were excavated in areas that were considered undisturbed, and one round test hole in each of two other areas where the likelihood of disturbance was high.

Results and Conclusions

Wayside 1:

Wayside 1 is located south of Outer Line Drive between the road and "Fort Muhlenberg". Reconstructed in 1940, the earthwork location is not valid (Thibaut 1982:98). The test excavation at the location of Wayside 1 consisted of a five by two and one-half foot rectangular test unit located in the center of the southern margin of the construction area. Excavation proceeded to the base of the plow zone into sterile subsoil at the depth of 1.0 feet below ground surface. Stratigraphy consisted of dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/3) humic topsoil from 0 to 0.3 feet below surface, dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/4) plow zone from 0.3 to 0.9 feet below surface, and dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/6) sterile clayey subsoil after 0.9 feet 40 below surface. A single rectangular strap buckle was the only artifact recovered which could date to the encampment. Measuring 38.6 by 28.1 by 4.3 mm, it is made of iron and is highly corroded.

A single fragment of oyster shell was also recovered from this test. The lack of subsurface features and low density of artifacts in the area during testing suggested the absence of significant encampment remains within the area to be disturbed by construction. Subsequent monitoring did not reveal the presence of any features.

Wayside 2:

The test excavation at Wayside 2 was located in the northeast margin of the projected impact area. This area lay outside that tested in 1972 (Egloff, Packard, and Ramsay 1972; Parrington 1979). Consisting of a single five by two and one-half foot unit excavated to sterile soil, the test did not indicate the presence of any subsurface features. Stratigraphy consisted of dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/3) humic soil from 0 to 0.3 feet below surface, dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/4) plow zone from 0.3 to 0.9 feet below surface followed by dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/6) sterile clayey subsoil. A fragment of green vessel glass with a textured surface and a fragment of modern whiteware ceramic were recovered from this test. The lack of subsurface features and low density of artifacts in the area suggest the absence of significant

encampment remains within the area to be disturbed by construction. Subsequent monitoring during construction produced a loose clump of fire reddened earth containing charcoal fragments. This may represent a portion of a feature disturbed in previous construction of the multi-use path which was immediately adjacent to the exhibit. The clump contained no artifacts and could possibly not relate to the encampment at all.

Wayside 13:

Wayside 13 is located immediately southwest of Fort Huntington. Fort Huntington has been rebuilt on its documented location (Thibaut 1982:101). A one and one half foot diameter test hole was excavated in the southwest corner of the construction impact area into sterile soil. The test hole indicated that the presence of subsurface features was unlikely since the ground at this spot was approximately 7026 sandstone fragments. Stratigraphy within the test consisted of very dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/2) humic soil from 0 to 0.5 feet below surface, followed by an intermediate zone of dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/4) leeching zone from 0.5 to 1.0 feet below surface, and dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/6) sterile clayey subsoil below 1.0 feet. The stone content of the soil throughout was approximately 60 to 800- of the total volume of the test. On the basis of these results, no additional testing was warranted. Subsequent monitoring did not reveal the presence of any features.

Wayside 16:

Wayside 16 is located within the area identified as "Artillery Park" in the DuPortail map. Previous maps of the area indicate the presence of a parking area in the vicinity, so a small test hole was excavated to examine the stratigraphy to determine if encampment features might have survived the parking area's construction and removal. A one-and one-half foot diameter round test hole was excavated in the northeast corner of the staked area. The test hole indicated that the stratigraphy was intact and that a larger test excavation was warranted. A five by two and one-half foot excavation unit was placed in the northwest corner of the staked area. Excavation was continued to the depth of 0.7 feet below surface. No encampment features or artifacts were recovered from this test. Stratigraphy in this unit was composed of dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/3) humic topsoil from 0 to 0.2 feet below surface, dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/4) plow zone from 0.2 to 0.55 feet below surface, followed by yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 5/6) sterile clayey subsoil. Subsequent monitoring of construction did not indicate the presence of any features.

Wayside 17:

wayside 17 is located near the intersection of Baptist and Gulph Roads, next to the restored gravel roadway. Since Baptist Road had been paved at one time, a single one by one-half foot diameter test hole was excavated in the southwestern corner of the construction area. Excavated to the depth of 2.0 feet below surface, the test indicated disturbance by road construction to the depth of 1.7 feet below surface. Stratigraphy in the test hole consisted of mottled dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/3) and dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/6) clayey soil from 0 to 1.2 feet below surface, followed by dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/6) clayey soil from 1.2 to 1.7 feet below surface, then yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 5/6) sterile clayey subsoil. Since the test indicated massive road construction disturbance in the most distant corner of the impact area, no further testing was conducted. Monitoring did not indicate the presence of any feature other than road construction.

Wayside 19:

Wayside 19 is located on the eastern edge of Baptist Road near a cluster of reconstructed huts. Since these huts were constructed near the location of refuse features discovered by Steve Warfel in 1975 (Warfel and Kent 1975), this wayside was tested by a five by two ' and one-half foot test unit located on the north east margin of the impact area. Excavated to the depth of 1.0 feet below surface, stratigraphy consisted of dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/3) humic topsoil mixed with road marl from 0 to 0.2 feet below surface. Below this depth, this is replaced by mottled dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/3), dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/4), and black (Munsell color 10 YR 2/1) soils with large quantities of commercial road marl to the depth of 1.0 feet below surface where excavation was suspended. A single cut nail was recovered (along with plastic and a polaroid negative fragment) from the lower strata. No features other than those associated with the road construction were identified during construction monitoring.

Wayside 23:

Wayside 23 is located north of Redoubt 1 overlooking the Schuylkill River and Fatland Ford. The true location of Redoubt 1 has not been archeologically identified and was constructed based on speculation in 1916 (Thibaut 1982:101). A five by two and one-half foot unit was excavated on the southeast corner of the impact area. Excavated to the depth of 1.0 feet below surface, stratigraphy consisted of very dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 3/2) humic topsoil from 0 to 0.3 feet below surface, followed by brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/3) plow zone from 0.3 to 0.7 feet below surface before turning to dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10 YR 4/4) sterile sandy subsoil. No encampment artifacts or features of any kind were recovered from this test. Monitoring of construction did not indicate the presence of any features.

Other Waysides:

All excavation for all other waysides was monitored by members of the Park Archeology branch between April 20 and April 24. No encampment features or significant features from other periods were identified. No additional artifacts were collected.

In conclusion, testing of selected locations and monitoring of all construction excavation did not identify any significant cultural resources disturbed by construction of the wayside exhibits. No additional archeological compliance is necessary for this project.

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